THE

HERALD OF TRUTH.

And HE that sat upon the throne said, "BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW." Rev. xxi 5.

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EXPLANATION OF THE TRINITY.

[*Continued from p.* 416.]

If the Holy Ghost is a person proceeding from the Father and the Son, how can he be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son? can he which receives his being from another, be equal with him which hath his being of himself? Can time be equal with eternity? If the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, then he is but a God of time, and not from eternity: and such a God may end in time. Again, if the Son was from eternity, how could he be begotten? And if the Holy Ghost was from eternity, how could he proceed, and take his original from the Father and Son? If the three persons were each of them eternal, that is without all beginning, then they could not give being one to another. Hence it is that those who hold this doctrine, worship a divided God, or three distinct Gods, therefore do they make their prayers in distinct forms, and pray to one God after one manner, and to another after another manner, making in reality three Gods, as distinct as three men, for though God is in sense said to be one in three, and three in one, yet he is not three persons, he is only one person with three titles, viz. Father, Son, and Spirit; a self-existing God, in Human form. If men would but search the scriptures for the sake of truth, they would see that the Son was but once begotten, and that was God's begetting himself into a Son, as it is written, God became flesh; now where was there a Father, but in that Son, and where was there a Son but in that Father, one God in one person alone, the glorious body wherewith the everlasting Father is clothed, in his dearly beloved Son. The Godhead is the everlasting Father,

his now glorified body the Son, and his divine proceeding the Holy Ghost—thus then you have what is to be understood by one in three, or three in one.

Many of the Fathers of the three first centuries, maintained the same doctrine.

Clemens Romanus says, that we ought to think of Jesus Christ as of God. *Pastor Hermas* says, the name of the Son of God is great and immense, and the whole world is supported by him. *St. Ignatius* says, I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who thus hath made us wise, he is God clothed in flesh: he tells the church of Rome, that our Lord Jesus Christ, now that he is in the Father, doth the more appear. *Athenagoras* says, by the Son of God, and through him, were all things made, the Father and the Son being one, the Son being in the Father, and the Father in the Son, in the unity and power of the spirit. *Justin Martyr* says, that he is both Christ, and the adorable God. *Clemens Alexandrinus* says, the word is both God and man, and that Christ, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He says, O the great God, O the perfect child.

Tertullian says, that God suffers himself to be conceived in the womb of a mother, and says there is one God the Father, and besides him there is no other, for the Son is not another God from the Father. *Origen* says, love the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father; and, adds, God descended to become man, that man thus redeemed and restored, might be made partaker of a divine nature. *Hippolytus* says, that Jesus Christ coming into the world, was both God and man. The *Emperor Constantine* says, that the believers and unbelievers, shall behold the Most High God clothed in flesh, who is our God and Saviour.

The following Scriptures prove the same truth, that Jesus Christ is the only God of Heaven and earth.

Deut. iv. 35. "*The Lord he is God; there is none else beside him.* 39. *The Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.* vi. 4. *Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.* xxxii. 39. *See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me.* 2. Sam. vii. 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.* Psalm lxxxvi. 10. *Thou art God alone.* Isaiah ix. 6. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*— xxxvii. 16. *Thou art the God even thou alone.* xli. 4. *I the Lord, the first, and with the last I am he.* xlii. 8. *I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another.* xlii. 3. *For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour.* 10. *Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.* 11. *I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.* xliv. 6. *I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God.* Isaiah xlv. 21. *I the Lord, and*

there is no God else beside a just God and a Saviour; there is none else beside me. 22. *Look unto me; and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else.* xlvii. 4. *As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* 12. *Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called; I AM HE; I am the first, and I also am the last.* Hosea xiii. 4. *And thou shalt know no God but me: for there is no Saviour beside me.* Zech. xiv. 9. *In that day shall there be one Lord and his name one:* Matthew i. 23. *And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.* John i. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* 3. *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*— 13. *He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not.* viii. 58. *Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I Am.* x. 30. *I and my Father are one.* 38. *That ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me and I in him.* xii. 45. *And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.* xiv. 7. *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.* 9. *Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.* 1. Tim. iii. 16. *God was manifest in the flesh.* Titus ii. 10. *That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, in all things.* iii. 4. *The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.* Jude 25. *To the only wise God our Saviour.* Rev. i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come the* ALMIGHTY."

How plain then must it be, to every candid mind, unshackled by prejudice, from the Scriptures, Reason, and the Fathers given above, to see this great and glorious truth, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one, the true, and the only God of heaven and earth, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. ii. 9; for be assured that nothing but prejudice for former opinions, arising from a haughty self-intelligent spirit, or undue affection for some predominant concupiscence, or darling evil, can prevent our reception of the glorious truth, which these pages are designed principally to manifest; let us but be once seriously disposed to part with every false principle, and, leave every evil way, as the light of divine truth shall expose or discover them to our view; thus to do the work of repentance, and to turn to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as our Creator, Saviour, and Regenerator; and then in his good time, agreeably to his promised Word, the Sun of Righteousness will beam forth in our souls, in its genuine heavenly splendour, as enjoyed by angelic spirits above, who know no other God than JEHOVAH JESUS, in a glorified and divine human form; who live from Him, as well as to Him, ever ascribing to him alone, as his just due, all the goods of love, and truths of wisdom, wherewith their happy Spirits are replenished, and from whom all their heaven is derived. To him alone be all the glory, now and for ever.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

Of Faith.

The reason why it is requisite to believe, that is, to have faith in, God the Saviour Jesus Christ, is, because such faith is directed towards a visible God, in whom is the invisible, and faith towards a visible God gaineth admission into the soul; for faith is spiritual in its essence, but natural in its form. Whatever is spiritual is received in that which is natural, in order to attain a reality of existence in man. In order that what is spiritual may excite sensation and produce effect, it must be attended with perception, and consequently with reception in the mind of man, and this is not possible except in the natural of man. On the other hand, a faith, which is merely natural, or which is deprived of its spiritual essence, is no faith; but only a kind of persuasion or science; having an appearance of faith in its externals, but having nothing in it of a saving nature, in consequence of wanting spirituality in its internals: such is the faith of those who deny the divinity of the Lord's humanity: such was the faith of Arius, and such also is the Socinian faith. What is faith, without a term or limit of direction, but like an unbounded view, extending through the universe, where the sight of the eye falling, as it were, into an empty void, is bewildered and lost. Such a faith may be compared to a bird, flying above the atmosphere into the purer regions of æther, where it expires as in a vacuum. In short, faith directed towards an invisible God is actually blind, because the human mind doth not see its God. The light of such faith is like that of a glow-worm or of decayed wood: whatever is seen by this light, under an appearance of reality, is merely visionary and the mind is deceived by a semblance of existencies. To this source the prevailing naturalism and infidelity of the times is to be attributed. Very different to this is a faith directed towards the Lord God the Saviour, who, by reason of his being God and man can both be approached and perceived in thought. Such a faith being once received, abideth forever. The vision of this faith is as when one looketh on a bright cloud, and seeth an angel in the midst thereof, inviting man to come to him, that he may raise him up into heaven: in such a manner the Lord appeareth to those who have faith in him and do his commandments.

When a man imbibes the spiritual doctrines of the church, and by them restraineth his free-will, he is withdrawn by the Lord, from concupiscencies and evil pleasures, till he findeth delight in what is good, and detesteth what is evil.

Of Charity and of good works.

Many cannot believe otherwise than that the works of charity consist solely in giving to the poor, and helping the miserable; which also they confirm from the sense of the letter of the word; when yet the works of charity consist in doing what is just and equitable, each in his own office, from the love of what is just and equitable, and of what is good and true. They who are not in the affection of charity, are in no other than external light, or an inferior intuition; and no one, from this intuition, can view superior things, for they appear to him as darkness.

Good works (so called) are evil works, unless the things appertaining to self-love and the love of the world are removed; for when works are done before the removal of these things, they appear outwardly good, but are inwardly evil; for they are done for the sake of reputation, or for the sake of gain, or self-pre-eminence, or for the sake of recompence; thus they are either meritorious or hypocritical, for the things appertaining to self-love and the love of the world, give to works such a nature and quality; but when these evils are removed, then the works become good, and are the goods of charity, there being nothng in them of self respect, regard to the world, to reputation or recompence. In this case, celestial and spiritual love from the Lord flows into the works, and causes them to become love and charity in act; and then the Lord, also by them purifies the natural or external man, and disposes it to order, that it may receive correspondently the celestial and spiritual things which flow in.

Of Spurious Charity.

All charity which is not joined with faith in one God, in whom is a divine trinity, is spurious. Such is the charity of the present church, whose faith is directed towards three persons of the same divinity in successive order, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and consequently towards three Gods, inasmuch as each of these persons is supposed to be a self-subsisting God, to such faith charity may be adjoined, as is the case with the maintainers of that faith, but it never can be conjoined, and charity only adjoined to faith is merely natural, and not spiritual, and consequently is spurious charity.

Of Hypocritical Charity.

Hypocritical charity is chargeable on those who in public and private humble themselves to the dust before God, pour forth long prayers with great devotion, put on a sanctified appearance, and yet in their hearts nourish self-worship.

Of Dead Charity.

Dead Charity prevaileth among those whose faith is dead, inasmuch as the quality of charity depends on the quality of faith;—faith is dead in all such as are without works, moreover faith is dead in all those who do not believe on God, but on living and dead men, and worship idols.

"And the smoke of their torments shall ascend for ever and ever" which signifies dense falsehoods fixing and perverting them, and flowing from their love continually—properly by ages of ages is signified eternal, or without end, but in the spiritual sense which is without the idea of time, is signified an interior state reigning continually.

FOR THE HERALD OF TRUTH.

Mr. Editor,

The *doctrine of spheres* as understood and explained in the New Church, has afforded me much satisfaction by enabling me to understand many things which before appeared to me inexplicable. Was the discernment of spirits mentioned in the apostolic age, any thing more than the influence of *spheres?* This was called a miraculous gift, but the vulgar definition of miracles, that "they are events contrary to the common course of nature," is inconsistent with reason, and a disgrace to religion. God cannot contradict himself either in his word or his works. He is the one eternal, all perfect. Many things appear miraculous because we are ignorant; we know not the powers of nature; we see not the immediate connexion between cause and effect. When the spiritual degree is opened in the mind; when the outward man is reduced into some degree of order, then he is susceptible of new feelings, and capable of higher degrees of knowledge. This may rationally account for the wonderful presentiments which people of extraordinary piety, have had of approaching calamities, the sickness or death of relations, and friends, &c. Their spirits which are their real selves were as much influenced by the spheres of others as if they had been bodily present; for spirits are not confined by time or place.

Although in general this influence is far the strongest, and in some cases not easily to be overcome when the person is actually present. Hence that uneasiness which is felt in the company of certain persons; the breast as it were contracts, the power of conversation is suspended, and you do not recover your ease and spirits until those persons are removed. Some of loose and profligate lives have been uncommonly distressed and almost deranged, when in the company of persons of

real piety: for a time they were not themselves. The professed libertine who has forgot to blush, has been discomposed and confounded at the simplicity, innocence, and yet dignity of an amiable and virtuous young girl. Such are the powers of virtue, and such is the respect which vice must involuntarily pay to it. Virtue, meekness, forbearance and humility, appear to be weak, yet are they founded on eternal strength; whereas profligacy and vice vaunt of their strength when they are only forms of weakness and death. Every principle of truth applies to the good of life. The doctrine here laid down is of great practical import. We see a deep ground for being peculiarly careful of the company we keep. When we associate with the wicked, we immediately expose ourselves to the influence of their spheres, which by continual intercouse will corrupt not only good manners but good principles. We are a wonderful combination of good and evil and therefore cannot be too watchful over ourselves, or too circumspect of our companions. Man is not an independent being. He experiences a healthful sympathy, or a morbid contagion from those who surround him; perhaps he is never in company without being rendered either better or worse, and his companions in this world prepare him for his companions in the next. Z. Z.

FOR THE HERALD OF TRUTH.

Mr. Editor—

Having read the following letter in a public journal, and thinking that its contents ought to be universally known, I herewith transmit a copy of it to you, hoping you may think it deserving a place in your useful publication. Yours sincerely, J. K.

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Mr. Editor—

A sincere desire to promote the welfare of my fellow creatures, leads me to take this public method of communicating the extraordinary satisfaction I have lately received from the perusal of two volumes of a work entitled *Angelic Wisdom concerning the divine love and wisdom, and concerning the divine providence*, written originally in Latin, by *Baron Swedenborg*, but now translated and published in English. I do not mean to take any merit to myself when I say, that I have read much, and thought more, on serious subjects, but surely I never saw in any book, ancient or modern, the great truths of revelation relating to the creation, redemption, and regeneration of man, opened, explained, and forced, with so much clearness, simplicity, and power of conviction, as in the above volumes.

Before I met with this truly inestimable Work, I had been led by popular prejudice to imagine, as I believe is the case with many others,

that the author was a madman, or at best a deluded visionary and enthusiast. But I was presently convinced and ashamed of my gross mistake, from observing the solidity of his principles, the soundness and perspicuity of his reasoning, the order and methodical arrangement of his ideas, together with the diversity and extent of his conceptions. Instead of the wild ravings of a disordered mind, which I had been taught to expect, how was I surprized to discover a judgment cool, dispassionate, and candid, yet clear, discerning and well informed! an understanding vast and comprehensive by nature, and by erudition rich and luminous! a mind impressed with the deepest veneration for the sanctity of the holy scriptures, and the divinity of the christian redeemer, and at the same time enlightened with the brightest and most consolatory views of the wonderful providences and provisions of the deity in regard to the eternal well-being of his creatures! And can a madman, I thought with myself, teach and speak the grandest and most sublime truths of heavenly wisdom? Can a visionary be solid and consistent, or an enthusiast calm, and sober, and orderly? But what particularly affected me, and led me most forcibly to reject my former ill-grounded opinion of this author, was, to observe the edifying tendency of all his doctrines, how they led immediately to the practice of solid virtue, and the fulfilment of all christian duties, pointing out in so plain a manner both the nature and necessity of that process of spiritual purification, through which all must pass, before they can attain conjunction of life with the supreme God, and thus be exalted to the pure happiness of intelligent beings.

In short, sir, I want words to express the indignation I feel at myself, for having thought disrespectfully of this instructive writer, and am alike unable to declare the veneration with which I now regard both him and his works, in consequence of the happy effects produced thereby in my mind. I seem to myself to be quite another man since I read the above volumes; my views and perceptions of things are totally changed from what they were before; I love and reverence my bible more than I thought it possible I ever should love it: my faith in the divinity of the christian redeemer seems immovably fixed, which had been rendered heretofore wavering by the pernicious sentiments of many modern free-thinkers, as well as by the mistaken ideas of many well-disposed christians: I can look also towards the great realities of another world with greater comfort and confidence now than formerly; and hence my mind is more engaged about an earnest preparation for that world which I now see to be so near and so real, and at the same time is more disenggaed from the vanities of this.—In a word (for I could dwell forever on the delightful subject) never before was my heart so truly thankful to the Father of mercies for giving me existence, or so fully bent upon labouring to live a christian life, and to aspire after every possible degree of perfection in the true love of God and of my neighbour, because I never before saw so clearly the dignity and destination of my being, neither was I ever

before so fully instructed in the nature of christian life and love, nor so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of forming my own heart and actions according to the spirit thereof.

Should any of your readers, from what has been said, be led to inquire after the above inestimable volumes, it will give me the utmost satisfaction to have been an instrument in the hand of Providence of discovering to them the precious treasure, and of removing prejudices concerning the author, which I am very sensible from my own particular case, operate unhappily with many to the preventing their looking into writings, from which otherwise they would receive the greatest benefits. I remain, with all respect,

Your's, &c. A. B.

FOR THE HERALD OF TRUTH.

A letter to a friend relating to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper: dated November 17, 1825. [*Received by the mail.*]

My Dear Sir—

It grieves me much to think of your being in the dark as respects the ordinances called baptism and the Lord's supper. That your mind may be settled and established, on right grounds, in relation to this matter, I have consulted those spiritual instructions which the Lord, in his divine mercy, has given for the use and regulation of the New Jerusalem. You will grant that the revelations, which our Heavenly Father has made for the New Church, by Emanuel Swedenborg, contain the heavenly doctrines according to which her life and faith and practice are to be regulated. Now the following are extracts from those revelations, on the two subjects of baptism and the Lord's supper.

First, on the subject of Baptism.

Arcana Cœlestia, n. 10,386. "Baptism was instituted for a sign that man is of the church, and for a memorial that he is to be regenerated: for the washing of baptism is nothing else than spiritual washing, which is regeneration.

10,387. "All regeneration is effected from the Lord, by the truths of faith, and by a life according to them; therefore baptism testifies that man is of the church, and that he can be regenerated, for in the church the Lord is acknowledged, who regenerates, and in the church is the word, containing the truths of faith by which regeneration is effected.

10,388. "This the Lord teacheth in John, "*Except a man be generated of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" iii. 5; water in the spiritual sense is the truth of faith derived from the word; spirit is a life according to that truth; and to be generated of these is to be regenerated.

10,389. "Inasmuch as every one who is regenerated also undergoes temptations, which are spiritual combats against evils and falses, therefore by the waters of baptism those temptations are also signified.

10,390. "Since baptism is for a sign and for a memorial of those things, therefore man may be baptised when an infant, and if not at that time when an adult.

10,391. "Let it be known therefore to those who are baptised, that baptism itself doth not give faith, nor salvation, but that it signifies that men receive faith, and they are saved, if they are regenerated.

10,392. "Hence it may be manifest what is meant by the Lord's words in Mark, "*He who believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he who believeth not shall be condemned,*" xvi. 16; he who believeth denotes who acknowledgeth the Lord, and receives divine truths from Him by the word; he who is baptized denotes who is regenerated by those truths from the Lord."

That these representations are meant to apply to the New Church, is evident from the following considerations, 1. That the man of the church, here mentioned "is regenerated." 2. That it is "a church in which the Lord is acknowledged." 3. That the spiritual sense is given in the representation. 4. That there is reference to temptations, which are spiritual combats against evils and falses signified by the waters of baptism. 5. That these instructions were given by revelation for the particular use of the New Jerusalem. 6. That Swedenborg never in any instance gives instructions for the Old Church as such.

The following are also his words on this subject. "That baptism at this day denotes initiation into the church, and into those things which are of the church, and that it denotes initiation into regeneration, and into those things which are of regeneration, n. 4255." "That baptism signifies regeneration; and since the latter is effected by spiritual combats, it also signifies temptation, n. 5120." "That washings formerly, and baptism at this day, signify regeneration by the truths of faith, n. 9088." Many more passages might be quoted, but these are sufficient.

Secondly, on the subject of the Lord's Supper.

Arcana Cœlestia, n. 10,519. "The holy supper was instituted by the Lord, that by it there may be conjunction of the church with heaven, thus with the Lord: on this account it is the most holy thing of the church.

10,520. "But in what manner conjunction is effected by it, is not apprehended by those, who do not know any thing concerning the internal or spiritual sense of the word, for they do not think beyond its external sense, which is the sense of the letter. From the internal or spiritual sense of the Word it is known what is signified by body and blood, and what by bread and wine, also what by chewing [or eating.]

10,521. "In that sense the body or flesh of the Lord is the good of love, in like manner the bread; and the blood of the Lord is the good of faith, in like manner the wine; and chewing or eating is appropriation and conjunction. The angels, who are attendant on man during the ceremony of the sacrament of the supper, have no other perception of those terms, for they apprehend all things spiritually; hence it is that the holy principle of love, and the holy principle of faith flows in on the occasion from the angels to men, thus by or through heaven from the Lord: thence comes conjunction.

10,522. "From these considerations it is evident that man, when he takes the bread which is the body, is conjoined to the Lord by the good of love to him from him; and when he takes the wine, which is the blood, he is conjoined to the Lord by the good of faith to him from him. But it is to be noted, that conjunction to the Lord, by the sacrament of the supper, is effected solely with those who are in the good of love and of faith to the Lord from the Lord. The Holy Supper is the seal of that conjunction."

That all this applies to the New Church called the New Jerusalem, is evident from the most holy nature of the particulars herein contained. What thing is there named which is not strikingly appropriate to the church of the new dispensation? The following is peculiar to it, "that the bread in the sacred supper, denotes the divine human and the holy proceeding (principle) of the Lord, thus love itself," nos. 2165, 2177, 2343, 2359. "That flesh denotes the divine good of the divine human (principle) of the Lord, also the reciprocal principle of man, and that blood denotes the divine truths of the divine good which is from the divine human (principle) of the Lord," n. 7850. "That without the internal sense it cannot in any wise be known why the holy supper was instituted, and what is there signified by flesh, body and bread," n. 8682, 9003. "That it is impossible for any one to know what is meant by those things, unless he knows there is an internal sense, and that in that sense are meant celestial and spiritual things in the place of natural, and that the natural things correspond to them, and have a signification according to correspondence; otherwise it would be impossible for any one to know why the holy supper was instituted, and what holiness there is in the bread, and why the bread is body and is flesh; besides innumerable other things," n. 8682.

It is my earnest and devout hope, that the Lord, who has given these spiritual instructions for the life, and faith and practice of the New Church, will open your heart and eyes to perceive and acknowledge their experimental and practical importance; and that you will

not suffer your proprium to hinder your exercise of the reciprocal principle which is indispensable to your enjoyment of the divine humanity and the divine proceeding through the mediums of attending angels during the ceremony of the holy supper. Yours, with affection.

ON MATTHEW, VI.

Verses 2 to 6. *Take heed that ye do not your alms before men*, &c.—By alms in the universal sense is signified every good which man willeth and doeth, and by praying, in the same sense, is signified every truth which man thinketh and speaketh; they who do those two things that they may be seen, that is, that they may appear, they do good and speak truth for the sake of themselves and the world, for they do good and speak truth for the sake of glory, which is the delight of self-love, which delight they have from the world; inasmuch as the delight of glory is to these a reward, therefore it is said that they have their reward, but the delight of glory, which in the world appears to them as heaven, after death is turned into hell: But they who do good and speak truth not for the sake of themselves, and the world, but for the sake of good itself and truth itself, these are meant by those who do alms in what is hidden, and who pray in what is hidden, for they do and pray from love or affection, thus from the Lord, this therefore it is to love good and truth for the sake of good and truth; of these therefore it is said, that the Father in the heavens will reward them in what is manifest; wherefore to be in goods and in truths from love or affection, which is the same thing with being in them from the Lord, is the reward, inasmuch as in those principles there is heaven, and every blessedness and satisfaction of heaven. By reward is properly meant that delight, satisfaction, and blessedness, which is in the love or affection of good and of truth; this love or this affection hath in it every joy of heart, which is called heavenly joy, and also heaven; the reason is because the Lord is in that love or that affection, and with the Lord also heaven; that joy therefore, or that delight, satisfaction and blessedness it is, which is properly meant by the reward to be received by those who do good and speak truth from the love and affection of good and truth, thus from the Lord, but in no case from themselves; and inasmuch as it is from the Lord, and not from themselves, it is not the reward of merit, but is the reward of grace. *Apoc. Explained.* 695.

Verse 3. *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.*—By this is signified that good ought to be done from a principle of good, and for the sake of good, and not for the sake of self and the world that it may appear: by alms is meant every good work; and by the left hand not knowing what the right hand doeth, is signified, that good

ought to be done from the principle of good itself, and not without that principle, inasmuch as that is not good; by the right hand is signified the good from which [good is done,] and by the left hand is signified truth from good, as was said above; this acts in unity with those who are in the good of love and charity, but not in unity with those who respect themselves and the world in the goods which they do, wherefore by the left hand is here meant to know and to act without good; that thine alms may be in secret, signifies, that they be not done for the sake of appearance. *Apoc. Explained.* 600.

Verse 6. *But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, &c* —It was a customary form of speech amongst the ancients, to talk of entering into a closet, and also of shutting the door on the occasion, when they meant to do any thing which should not appear: this form of speech was derived from significatives in the ancient church; for by house in the spiritual sense they understood man, n. 3128; by the closets and the bed chambers they understood the interiors of man; hence to come or enter into a closet, signified into themselves, consequently that it did not appear: and inasmuch as entering into a closet was significative, therefore mention is made of it in the word throughout, as in Isaiah, "Depart my people, *enter into thy closets and shut thy door after thee;* hide thyself as for a little moment, until anger pass away." xxvi. 20; that to enter into closets in this passage doth not denote entering into closets, is very manifest, but to keep themselves in secret, and in themselves. *A. C.* 5694.

Verse 13. *Lead us not into temptation.*—According to the literal sense it appears, that the Lord leads man into temptation, but the internal sense is, that the Lord leads no one into temptation. *A. C.* 3425.

The Lord tempteth no man, but is continually endeavoring to deliver from temptations, so far as is possible, or so far as deliverance doth not promote evil. He continually also hath respect to good, into which he leads him who is in temptations; for God never concurs with temptations in any other manner, and although it is predicated of Him, that he permits, still it is not according to the idea which man hath of permission, viz. that he concurs by permitting, for man cannot conceive otherwise, but that he who permits, also wills, when yet it is the evil appertaining to man which causeth temptation, and which also leadeth into temption, the cause whereof is not at all in God. *ib.* 2768.

The proximate causes of temptations are the evils and falses appertaining to man, consequently the evil spirits and genii who infuse; nevertheless no one can be tempted, that is, undergo any spiritual temptation, unless he hath conscience, for spiritual temptation is nothing else but torment of conscience, consequently no others can be tempted, except they who are in celestial and spiritual good, for these have conscience, whereas others have it not, and do not even know what conscience is: Conscience is a new will and a new understanding from the Lord; thus it is the presence of the Lord with man, and the nearer this is, so much the more man is in the affection of good or

truth: if the presence of the Lord be nearer than in the degree in which man is in the affection of good or truth, man cometh into temptation; the reason is, because the evils and falses which appertain to man, tempered with the goods and truths appertaining to him, cannot endure a nearer presence. *A. C.* 4299.

FOR THE HERALD OF TRUTH.

Mr. Editor,

Mr. Owen's system of communities has excited considerable attention in the United States; it has received the unqualified approbation of some, and the unlimited condemnation of others. But to neither of these opinions have I yet been able to subscribe, for at the same time that I discover some things which appear to me true and beautiful, I find others which appear the reverse. I have noticed in several of the public papers some severe strictures, but I could derive no satisfaction from them; they appeared to be written under the influence of prejudice, and without any correct knowledge of the subject. I seriously regret that Mr. Owen should not have more correct ideas on the subject of religion, and yet I believe that he possesses more real christianity than many who profess and preach it. If Mr Owen loves his neighbour as himself and does unto others as he would they should do unto him, so far he is a christian. And whether he calls these heavenly principles by the name of morality, reason, philosophy or religion, they are still the same; the name does not change the quality. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." And whatever great professions or pretensions his enemies may make, yet if they do not live up to these golden rules, they are not christians, *but in reality idolaters, and the God they worship is self or the world.* An infidel under the cloak of christianity is the worst kind of infidel. And he who embraces error, although he may call, and even believe it to be christianity, is rather an infidel than a christian, because while he adheres to error, he rejects real christianity.

But my principal object in this communication is to introduce Mr. Owen's system into the Herald of Truth for discussion. I am sensible that it is not strictly theological, but still whether true or false, it certainly involves the cause of religion and must eventually either benefit or injure it. I wish to see the subject fairly and dispassionately brought before the public, and that its excellencies may be truly stated, and its errors and defects plainly, distinctly and yet mildly pointed out.—Mr. Owen does not appear to be sensible, that matter of itself is inert or dead, and that it has no life or motion but what is produced by the operation of spirit, and therefore that the whole external world would be lifeless and motionless were it not acted upon from the spiritual

world. The spiritual world may properly be denominated the world of causes, while this world is only a world of effects. In the spiritual world there are two great and opposite principles, viz. *good and evil*, and these flowing into this world and acting upon man are the causes of all his happiness and misery. The principle of good produces happiness, and that of evil, misery. But man is a free agent and has the power of choosing and refusing. He can make choice of the good causes and thereby enjoy their good effects, which is happiness; or he can choose evil causes and thereby entail upon himself their natural effects, which is misery. In consequence of finding the systems of religion, which came immediately under his eye, inconsistent and irrational, Mr. Owen appears to have concluded that all religion must be of that description. But he ought to know that true religion is nothing more than that system of action which would enable us to embrace and do every thing that would render us truly happy here and hereafter, and to shun and reject every action and thing that can render us miserable both here and hereafter.

This is the whole object of true religion which when stripped of the necessary appendages that man has fastened to it, and divested of the rubbish has been cast upon it, will appear plain, rational and beautiful. But I shall forbear for the present, and leave it with you Mr. Editor to insert or reject this communication as you may think proper.

AMICUS.

Note.—The Editor believes with Amicus that a fair and careful investigation of the above subject would be useful, but there cannot be an opportunity in this volume as but two numbers more are wanting to complete it, which would be insufficient to do justice to such a discussion. But should sufficient encouragement be received to justify its continuance, then shall the subject be taken up and an opportunity given for a full examination.

FOR THE HERALD OF TRUTH.

Mr. Editor—

Amongst the members of the New Church in the United States of America, there seems to be some diversity of opinion on the important subject of ordination. Several times I believe it has been proposed for consideration, and once or twice a special committee appointed for that purpose, but no return I believe was ever made. It still therefore remains in the same unsettled state. A careful examination is every day becoming more and more important, because the church is every day increasing. I have been wishing the Herald of Truth might be made a medium for the discussion of this subject, and that the friends of the New Church would through that bring forward their various opinions and arguments and that after a careful investigation they might unanimously arrive at the same conclusion. Permit me

therefore, Dear Sir, most earnestly to request of you, as the Editor of a religious publication to bring this very important subject before your readers, both clergy and laity, hoping they may be induced to pay all that attention to it, that at the present time it so seriously merits.

A FRIEND TO THE NEW CHURCH.

Note—The Editor agrees with this writer that the subject abovementioned is of great importance, and that it deserves the immediate and serious attention of all the friends of the New Church. The same subject has also been proposed by a much respected friend to the eastward, and the only reason that it has not been brought forward, is the uncertainty of the continuance of this publication, after the expiration of the present year. But should its continuance be determined on, immediately thereafter the subject shall be introduced and a fair opportunity given for its full investigation.

***It was intended that the remainder of the answer to G. W. C. concerning the genealogy of *Jesus Christ*, should occupy the two or three last pages of this number, but after the reception of the two last communications it was found necessary to defer it until the next number.

Translation of part of a letter written by Emanuel Swedenborg, to Dr. Beyer.

"With regard to what passed in the earliest part of my life, about which you wished to be informed:—From my fourth to my tenth year, my thoughts were constantly engrossed by reflecting upon God, on salvation, and on the spiritual passions of man.—I often revealed things in my discourse which filled my parents with astonishment, and made them declare at times, that '*certainly the angels spoke through my mouth.*'

"From my sixth to my twelfth year, it was my greatest delight to converse with the clergy concerning faith, to whom I often observed, that charity or love was the life of faith, and that this vivifying charity or love *was no other than the love of one's neighbour.*—That God vouchsafe's this faith to every one; but that it is adopted by those only, who practise that charity.

"I knew of no other faith or belief at that time, than that God is the Creator and preserver of nature.—That he endues man with understanding, good inclinations and other gifts thence derived.

"I knew nothing at that time of this systematic or dogmatic kind of faith, that God the Father imputes the righteousness or merits of his Son to whomsoever, and at such times, as he wills even to the impenitent. And had I heard of such kind of faith, it would have been then, as now, perfectly unintelligible to me."